



BERKELEY COUNTY

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Clarence T. "Mac" McGee

Director

September 22, 2006

Dear Editor:

On Monday night ETV aired a program billed as the First Congressional District Debate which was actually an interview with the Democratic Candidate.

However, the purpose of my letter is to respond concerning our Veterans Community.

First of all, let me say that the following is my personal observation after listening to the video provided by E.T.V. I feel that the discussion came down to one key question concerning Congressman Henry Brown's support of Veterans in the 1st District.

Berkeley County processes an average of 26 claims daily to the Department of Veterans Affairs. These claims are for an array of earned Veteran's Benefits, ranging from assistance with VA Hospital care, Nursing Home care, Retiree Benefits, Disability, Pension, Education Benefits and obtaining Records of Service, Medals and Commendations and Service Medical Records for Veterans and returning National Guard and Reserve troops, as well as Death Indemnity and Education claims for widows and other dependents.

Very often this office goes to Congressman Brown for assistance with the above matters, and his office always accepts our requests gladly; more often than not the problem is resolved favorably for the Veteran and /or his family on a timely basis.

I have been involved with Veterans Benefits since 1976; I serve as the Director of Veterans Affairs for Berkeley County, SC. I have served on many committees and panels on a State and National Level and could select several Veterans issues that I think could be improved upon. No one, and certainly no one Congressman, could resolve all of the issues that are involved in caring for Veterans and their families.

As the long time Director of Veterans Affairs, I can tell you for a fact that Congressman Brown has always actively assisted Veterans whom I have

personally referred to him for help. He has been quick to respond to calls for assistance since the first day he took office in January 2001. In the 1st District Congressman Brown's office has done much for our Veterans.

He has been the best advocate for Veterans in many years. Immediately after being elected to Congress, he requested membership on the House Veterans Affairs Committee, rising to Chairman of the Benefits Subcommittee two years later and then as Chairman of the Health Subcommittee in January, 2005. Using the prestigious positions, he has fought for funding for Veterans programs, which have increased a whopping 40% since Congressman Brown's election 6 years ago, while every other agency has either been cut or showed only modest increases.

The House just passed \$2.4 billion for the first major new VA Hospital construction around the Nation in 15 years, including funds for the planning and design of a new Charleston VA Medical Center to replace the aging Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center. (Statistics are available @ veterans.house.gov).

To say that Congressman Brown neglects Veterans and their issues is not a good statement. Please refer to the enclosed Congressional Accomplishments In Support of Veterans, which certainly supports the above.

Sincerely,



Clarence T. "Mac" McGee
Director of Veterans Affairs
Berkeley County